

Tiverton Open Space Commission and Land Preservation
Minutes of January 26, 2009 meeting
Essex Library, Highland Road

Present: Susan Anderson, Dick Bixby, Ginger Lacy (co-chair), Gayle Lawrence, Garry Plunkett, Phil Schuyler, and Martin Van Hof.

Call to Order: 7:06 PM by Ginger Lacy.

Administrative Announcements and Reports:

- The December minutes were accepted as corrected. Susan will submit them to Martha for posting.
- Ginger outlined highlights of Town Council Workshop on 1/5/09 presented by Mr. Tietz regarding legal requirements for conduct of meetings by commissions and boards in Tiverton.
 - o We are currently in compliance with the expectations for meetings and the appropriate use of email for commission business. Our quorum requirement is five members.
 - o We are not required to send minutes to the Secretary of State but are invited to do so.
 - o Minutes are to be kept for one year and are stored in the TOSC files at Town Hall.
 - o Unless a vote is unanimous, we are required to record how each member voted on motions presented at regular meetings.
- The Tiverton Land Trust (TLT) will sponsor a program on the "History and Geography of Stone Walls," presented by Robert Thorson on Sunday, April 19 at the Meeting House in Four Corners. TOSC will provide "in-kind" support for this community event.
- Dana Sumner's Appreciation Brunch will be on January 31. Garry is organizing small gifts and gags to wish him well during his recovery and to thank him for his tireless efforts as a steward.
- Dick Bixby's Treasurer's report: Open Space Acquisition \$39,918.67; OS Stewardship \$939.29; OS Appropriation \$32.71; Fort Barton Appropriation \$1,704.61. Accepted.
- Dick provided information on communication from Town Administrator regarding new pre-approval requirements for processing payments.
- Garry reported receipt of the annual Pocassetlands Stewardship Fund grant from RI Foundation. The distribution this year was \$569.00 received on January 20, 2009.

- Motion by Garry: To use the grant of \$569 to support the on-going work on the grasslands habitat restoration project in Weetamoo Woods. Seconded by Martin. Passed: unanimously.
- Ginger suggested that in the future the other Tiverton open space managers be advised in advance that TOSC would be considering disposition of the Fund proceeds. It was agreed that those groups will receive that notification (delete) via TOSC agenda. Garry will provide Pocassetlands Stewardship Fund annual report for Commission approval at the February meeting.
- Martin reported on recent problem of metal detector use at Pardon Gray and Weetamoo Woods and his interactions with the offenders and Chief Blakey of Tiverton Police.
 - o TLT will improve signage near trail entrances at Town Farm entrance.
 - o On behalf of TOSC, Martin will write a draft letter, Ginger will get copies of the ordinance and send to Blakey noting specific town ordinances prohibiting removal or disturbance of artifacts or natural materials and identifying properties protected by same. Chief Blakey has agreed to inform officers of these to improve enforcement.
- Garry reported that The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has interest in creating a trail map and guide of all open space areas in the East Bay. After a brief discussion the group expressed concern with overuse of trails and questioning the need to advertise the trails further, Ginger agreed to contact John Berg of TNC to obtain more information about intended use of maps and level of distribution.

Announcements:

- Susan was recently appointed to Tiverton Historic Preservation Advisory Board.
- On April 25th, the Historic Preservation Society of RI will hold an event on preservation of outdoor places (archaeological sites, farmlands, and historic structures) at URI.
- On March 21, the Land and Water Summit will be held at URI.
- The series of conservation articles, published in local newspapers, is available in pdf format at TLT's website. Recently, Jana Porter, journalist, contacted Garry regarding the Weetamoo grasslands restoration project, possibly to include in the next article in the series.

- A copy of –The Stories Trees Tell by Susan Coolidge will be donated to Essex Library for the children's room. Thank you Garry and TNC.

Trails and Habitats:

- Fort Barton:

Trails: Phil reported that despite icy conditions on steps and some litter, the trails are getting use and are in good shape in their winter state.

Vandalism: Garry reported on recent vandalism of redoubt earthworks by teen bikers. Officer Black arrived quickly and apprehended two youths. Currently, disposition has not been determined, but it is likely that community service will be required.

Redoubt Preservation: After some discussion, it was agreed that interested members will do additional research and make inquiries regarding availability of funding and resources for a comprehensive preservation project at this important historic site.

- Weetamoo Woods (WW):

Trails: Use of trails is up considerably. Garry reported that original supply of trail maps is at its end. He indicated the Tiverton Sign Shop may print new maps in exchange for mention on same.

Ginger offered to prepare pdf and lay out information. It was agreed to proceed. "Weetamoo Woods signs and printing by Tiverton Sign Shop (phone number)" will be wording.

Vandalism: "No Parking" sign was removed from East Rd. parking area. Garry has replaced it.

- Site Inspection: Garry just completed the annual site inspection of the Helger parcel. No stewardship issues requiring action were found. He recommended that such site inspections of isolated parcels be completed and reported on annually.

- Elaine Lee Memorial Project: Garry, Martin and Martha can advise garden club members on native plant selection for the proposed improvement project at the site.

Education and Grants:

- Tiger Cubs Workday: After a guided walk with Garry, Vicki Duclos Barrett, expressed interest in a workday at WW for Pack 8. Gayle will contact her for the Elaine Lee project and/or the Clean Up Week sponsored by the Tiverton Garden Club.

- DEM/DOT grant update: \$1750 reimbursement should arrive shortly. Members verified volunteer hours and signed completed reimbursement request documentation for two outstanding grants. Gayle will mail both packets to Greg Cassidy at DEM.
- Other: Gayle described the Litter Committee's "Adopt an Area" project and asked members to email her if they are interested. Intent of project is to develop a list of residents regularly involved in litter removal and to encourage more to participate.
- Tiverton Garden Club Annual Clean Up Week: April 18–26, with tentative plans for a kick-off clean up on 4/18. Ginger suggested concentrating effort on a different problem area for each day of the week.

Next Meeting: February 17th at 7:00 PM, Essex Library.

Meeting adjourned: 9:25 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Gayle Lawrence